

REMARKS

By the present amendment, claim 1 has been amended by incorporating therein the subject matter of claim 4. Accordingly, claim 4 has been canceled.

Claims 1-2 and 5-9 are pending in the present application. Claim 1 is the only independent claims.

In the Office Action, claims 1 and 4-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over US 6,519,017 to Ichibashi et al. ("Ichibashi") in view of US 6,342,934 to Kameyama et al. ("Kameyama") and further in view of US 6,773,766 to Meyer et al. ("Meyer").

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested. In each of Ichibashi and Kameyama, the selective reflection wavelength range is within the visible range. As a result, the products according to Ichibashi and Kameyama have color.

Specifically, in Ichibashi, a blue-selective reflection color filter (Ichibashi at col. 21, lines 31-35), a green-selective reflection color filter (Ichibashi at col. 21, lines 36-39), and a red-selective reflection color filter (Ichibashi at col. 21, lines 48-51) are manufactured from a liquid crystal ink. In other words, the cholesteric layer in Ichibashi functions as a color filter. The term "color" indicates that the cholesteric layer in Ichibashi has a selective reflection wavelength range in the visible range.

Further, Kameyama describes its product as follows (Kameyama at col. 18, line 65 to col. 19, line 3):

two kinds of cholesteric liquid crystal polymer layers reflecting left circularly polarized light were formed. The layers had selective reflection wavelength regions of 400 to 470 nm and 600 to 700 nm, respectively, and were different from each other in the mesogen group ratio.”

In other words, in Kameyama, the selective reflection wavelength region is in the visible range (400-470 nm and 600-700 nm).

In contrast, in the presently claimed invention, a selective reflection wavelength range of the cholesteric liquid crystal layer is in a range not larger than 350 nm, as recited in present claim 1. An advantage of this feature is that a polarizing plate that is colorless can be obtained. This feature of the present claims is not taught or suggested in Ichibashi and Kameyama, and Meyer fails to remedy this deficiency. Therefore, the present claims are not obvious over the cited references taken alone or in any combination.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the rejections should be withdrawn.

In conclusion, the invention as presently claimed is patentable. It is believed that the claims are in allowable condition and a notice to that effect is earnestly requested.

If there is, in the Examiner's opinion, any outstanding issue and such issue may be resolved by means of a telephone interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Amendment
Serial No. 10/500,287
Attorney Docket No. 042424

If this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of the response period. Please charge the fee for such extension and any other fees which may be required to our Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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